

Challenges of international students' adjustment to a higher education institution

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Abstract

© 2016 Kazakov. The relevance of this work is determined by the real problems of foreign students' adaptation to the educational environment of Russian high school. International students face certain problems, complicating adaptation to a new lifestyle, to the educational environment of the Russian high school, to a completely new social and cultural environment. Every year more and more foreign students come to Russia to get higher education, and every foreign student goes through an objective process of adaptation to college life. This article aims to develop recommendations, basic principles for an educational institution that provides educational services to foreign citizens. The leading method to the study of this problem is a qualitative method of case-study, which allows to focus on practical knowledge about real everyday situations, faced by foreign students in Russia. The case-study method provides an opportunity to pay close attention to the impact of social, cultural and academic factors on their adaptation. The article revealed that international students often face a series of transitional difficulties immediately after arriving to study in Russian universities. The problems are cataloged according to academic, social and cultural aspects. The article states that in order to overcome these problems, the students use resources provided mainly by the university. On the other hand, it is found out that these problems motivate foreign students to develop strategies to meet emerging challenges. The data obtained can be used in the practice of the university administration, faculty and staff to timely detect and eliminate academic, social and cultural challenges faced by international students at the beginning of their studies in Russia. Attention to these issues will provide more adequate support for foreign students.

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Keywords

Academic challenges, Cultural adjustment, Higher education, International students, Social isolation